



Lambda Letters Project

32576

Vol. 4, No. 2 February, 1996

6212 Silverton Way, Carmichael, California 95608

Phone (916) 965-6851

Third Annual Membership Meeting Announced

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Nominations for Board Members Being Accepted

Deadline for Nominations February 25, 1996

The Lambda Letters Project will hold its third annual membership meeting in Sacramento on Saturday, April 20, 1996. Please mark your calendars! The meeting site is still to be determined. The agenda will include election of additional Board members, approval of Lambda Letters' 1996 budget, and other important business of the Project.

Our bylaws require that we publish a list of all those nominated for election to the Board. The list must be published at least 30 days in advance of the meeting in which the election is to take place. That requires that we have the names, and any background information about the nominees, by no later than February 25, 1996. If you wish to run for the Board, or if you want to nominate someone, please send the nominee's name and background information to us by that date. We

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Schizophrenic History

It was the best of times it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom it was the age of foolishness, . . . it was the season of Light it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope it was the winter of despair . . .

—Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

This is the second of an occasional series of commentaries based on the ideas expressed in Urvashi Vaid's book, *Virtual Equality*.

Dickens' quote sounds a lot like now, doesn't it? In many ways, the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community has made tremendous strides towards fair and equal treatment. Yet the expanding power of conservatives and the religious right grow ever more ominous.

Urvashi Vaid suggests that this paradoxical situation arises in part from the fact that, for the past two decades, our community has sought equality almost entirely through a strategy of civil rights. We have attempted what she calls "mainstreaming" the lesbian gay and bisexual community. Urvashi says our community has largely abandoned the politics of liberation that it championed during the sixties and early seventies.

The civil rights strategy has sought, with growing success, to persuade society that lesbians, gays, and bisexuals should be treated

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Lambda Letters Progress Report

Letters Collected

November, 1995	3,470 letters
In all of 1995	32,470 letters

Dollars Spent

November, 1995	\$ 2,895
In all of 1995	\$21,060

Can You Help?

Please support the very important work of the Lambda Letters Project with your contributions.

The Lambda Letters Newsletter is published monthly except in December by the Lambda Letters Project Inc., 6212 Silverton Way, Carmichael, CA 95608.
Postmaster: send address changes to the address above.

Lambda Letters Project

Statement of Purpose

To promote people of color, feminist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV/AIDS status advocacy and to bring people of color, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered persons, and persons affected by or living with HIV/AIDS into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof.

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Please Oppose the New Poll Tax

During the first half of this century many Southern states required anyone who wanted to vote to pay a fee called a poll tax. Its purpose was to make it difficult for African Americans to vote. It worked because many of them were poor and could not afford the tax. Eventually the courts outlawed the practice because it was discriminatory.

A.B. 10, introduced by Assemblymember Hoge (R-Pasadena), may have a similar effect. This bill requires that, at the time of registration, a person must present two of the three following documents: a driver's license, a Social Security card, or a birth certificate. Many naturalized citizens are unable to provide a birth certificate—yet they may legally vote. Either their countries of origin do not have them or the process of getting them from those countries is too difficult. Even for native-born Americans, obtaining a birth certificate can be a difficult, bureaucratic process beyond the ability of a poor and uneducated person. A large portion of naturalized citizens, and of the poor, are people of color.

People who are unable to provide a birth certificate would have to have a driver's license and Social Security card to register to vote. Drivers licenses must be paid for. Hence, A.B. 10 would, in effect, establish a poll tax for all who are unable to get a



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Why No Letter on the Federal Budget?

This year's Federal budget is still in a state of turmoil; there may not even be a real budget this year—and who knows about next year? Congress and the President continue to do things piecemeal, but their timing has been such that any further letters from us to them would be aimed at a moving target. We still urge each of you to contact your Congressperson individually and to ask him or her to take the various actions about which we have written in the past.

birth certificate. Many people of color are poor and live in major cities. Often they neither need nor can afford a car and a driver's license. A.B. 10 would effectively disenfranchise these citizens.

Our nation has one of the lowest voter turnout rates in the western world. Voter turnouts of less than 40 percent are common. That is shameful. We should make it easier to vote, not harder. If there is a demonstrated need to verify a voter's identity, it should be done in a way that doesn't create an expense for the voter and doesn't tend to keep people of color out of the voting booth.

Please write to your senator and oppose A.B. 10. Oppose the modern version of the poll tax.

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New Drugs for State AIDS Drug Assistance Program

For a number of years now California's AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) has been a literal life-saver and life-extender for many persons living with HIV disease. Started when we only had AZT, the program provides prescription drugs for those who do not have Medi-Cal or other drug payment programs. The cost of the program has often exceeded its yearly budget appropriation, but somehow the state has been able to shift money from other programs to fund this important need. (These costs have gone up because of both increases in the number of persons eligible for the program and the addition of coverage for new drugs.)

Now two new FDA approved drugs, 3TC and saquinavir, need to be added to the list of drugs for which ADAP will pay. In addition, as usual, the program needs a budget augmentation because even without adding these two drugs it will run out of money before this fiscal year is over. By now the request for these actions should have moved from the Department of Health Services, Department of Finance, and Legislature to the Governor's desk where we are urging his positive action. If the item is not yet on Pete Wilson's desk, our request will have the effect of asking him to get it there.

Striking Back at Domestic Violence

It could be said that the death of Nicole Simpson Brown and the whole O.J. debacle did have one positive outcome: it caused many to take a hard, sobering look at domestic violence against women, as well as how the current system tragically falls short of protecting its victims. In response to intense public pressure, a wide range of domestic violence bills were written and introduced in our State Congress during 1995. The bill we are supporting this month is one of these bills, authored by Assembly-member Jackie Speier (D-San Francisco) in cooperation with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office.

AB 720 is well written and expands the scope of current domestic violence law by increasing the penalties for repeat offenders of domestic violence. AB 720 *requires* courts to issue protective orders—where currently courts are only required to *consider* issuing such orders. AB 720 also raises the bail amount of the accused to an amount necessary to ensure the safety of the victim and the victim's family; and adds "dating relationships" to relationships covered by domestic violence law. It should be noted that current law already states that domestic violence is punishable regardless of sexual orientation.

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Bill Prohibiting Gay Marriages Passes in Assembly; Senate Too?

Assembly Bill 1982 (Knight, R-Palmdale), which provides that any valid marriage contracted outside the state of California would be valid in this state *except* marriages between individuals of the same gender, was passed by the Assembly Judicial Committee by a 9-4 vote, with two members either not present or abstaining. The bill was then heard on the Assembly floor on January 31st, where it unfortunately passed. Voting details will be presented in next month's newsletter.

This bill was introduced, with 30 coauthors, in anticipation of the Hawaii State Supreme Court's eventual ruling, making gay marriages legal in that state. Currently, California law provides that all valid marriages contracted outside the state are valid within the state.

Those members of the Judiciary Committee voting in favor of the bill were:

Bill Morrow (R-Oceanside)
Barbara Alby (R-Sacramento)
Jim Battin (R-Palm Desert)
Baugh (R-Huntington Beach)
Jan Goldsmith (R-Poway)
George House (R-Modesto)
Howard Kaloogian (R-Carlsbad)
William Knight (R-Palmdale)
David Knowles (R-Cameron Park)

Those voting against the bill were:

Debra Bowen (D-Torrance)
Susan Davis (D-San Diego)
Liz Figueroa (D-Fremont)
Kerry Mazzoni (D-San Rafael)

The two members not voting were: Cruz Bustamante (D-Fresno) and Michael Machado (D-Stockton).

Given the current composition of the Assembly, we're frankly not surprised that AB 1982 passed. However, we have different expectations from the Senate, so we are targeting Senate *pro tempore* Bill Lockyer and asking him to use his position to assure

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that AB 1982 does not clear the Senate committee to which it is assigned.

Please write to Senator Lockyer to urge him to help defeat this bill. We have enclosed a sample letter which you can either sign or use as a starting point for writing your own letter. If you write your own letter, please be sure to include any pertinent personal experiences to add impact to your letter.

Additional points you may wish to make are that such a policy, if enacted, would deliver a setback to HIV/AIDS prevention and care efforts by discouraging long-term relationships. Same-gender marriage would mean more individual responsibility, not less; more family stability, not less; and more security for California's children, not less. Less than 40 years ago, interracial marriages were illegal in California because of the same biases that are used to prohibit gay marriages. They were thought to be "unnatural" and "against God's will" and would undermine the very institution of marriage and family.

We also ask that you write Assemblymembers Bowen, Davis, Figueroa, and Mazzoni and express your appreciation to them for voting against this blatant attempt to single out lesbians, gays, and bisexuals for discrimination. If you wish to know how your Assemblymember voted on this bill when it was heard on the floor, please give Lambda Letters a call.

Next time we hope to report that the Senate soundly defeated this bill!

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Katz: Not Exactly the Cat's Meow

Rancho Cordova-based radio station KST (650 AM) is home base—emphasize the word “base”—for disc jockey Jeff Katz. The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) recently reported that Mr. Katz, who hosts a morning talk show regularly, attacks lesbians and gays on his show.

On November 27th, he opened his show by shouting “You are looking for outright approval and you’re not going to get it here!” His message was directed at lesbians and gays. On other occasions, he has expressed his disgust at the sight of two men kissing, although it appears he does not find two women kissing to be as objectionable, provided it is done on stage and for his entertainment.

Mr. Katz has also “informed” his listeners that homosexuals are out to get their children. He stated on one show, “They do not reproduce. They are not going to be happy until they steal your kids.” (Ho hum, where haven’t we heard *this* before?) In addition to being child stealers, Katz has argued that there is a connection between homosexuals, Nazis, and satanism! He insists that such statements are not hateful, but factual.

Help us to help Mr. Katz get his facts straight. Particularly if you live in the Sacramento area, please call the General Manager of KST AM at (916) 858-1588. Better yet, write to him at the following address:

Dave Burke
General Manager, KST AM
10910 Olson Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

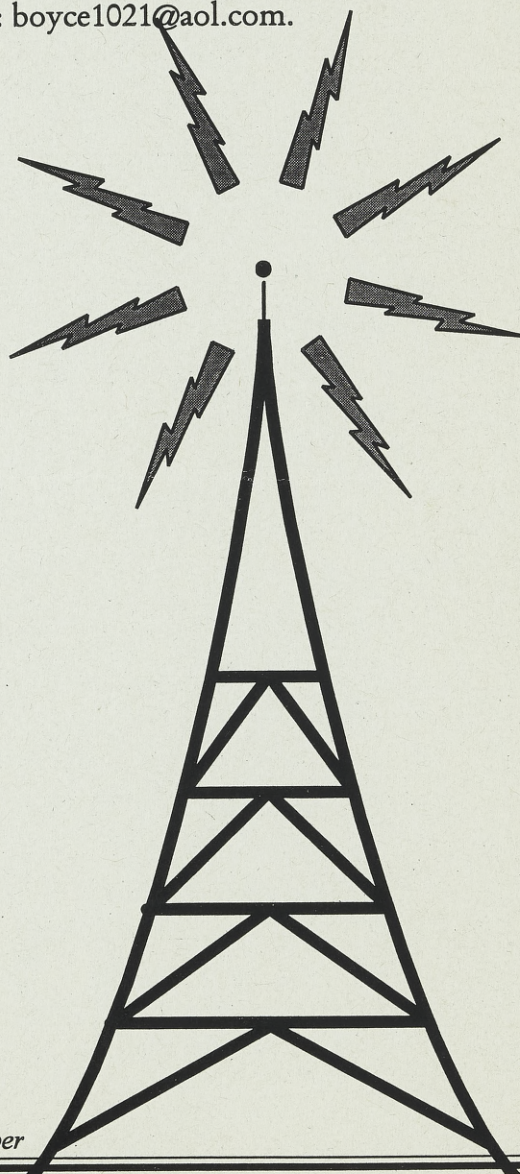
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If you have e-mail, you can also send a message directly to Jeff Katz at:

radiokatz@aol.com

Let us know if he responds by e-mailing us at our e-mail address: boyce1021@aol.com.



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Schizophrenic History

Continued from page 1

equally and fairly under the law regardless of what people think of the morality of homosexuality. However, this civil rights strategy has made little attempt to change the fundamental negative moral attitudes and emotions that many people have about homosexuality.

This leaves the gains accomplished by the civil rights movement at risk.

Fundamentalists can arouse society's negative emotions about homosexuality by simply and repeatedly focusing on the presumed, or actual, sexual practices of the gay community. Make no mistake: these are powerful emotions and, once aroused, can swamp any well-intentioned support the public may have for fairness for lesbians, gays, and bisexuals. Thus, unless we change society's moral judgments about our sexuality, any civil rights gains we make are tenuous at best.

Repeated studies have found that people who know out lesbians, gays, and bisexuals are less likely to have negative moral judgments about them. So coming out is a powerful tool in obtaining secure and lasting civil rights.

In addition, the civil rights mainstreaming process results in pressure to act and appear "respectable," so as not to irritate or anger the power brokers we are trying to persuade to give us our rights. This means toning down or even abandoning our effeminate men, butch lesbians, sexual heretics, and certainly the crossdressers and transsexuals. It also results in the implied acceptance of a very dangerous principle: that fair and equal treatment under the law must be earned by "good behavior." Civil rights become no longer unalienable. They become merely privileges earned by "respectable" people.

To be safe in America, our community must:

- ♦ Re-establish the principle that civil rights are unalienable, not earned privileges.
- ♦ Persuade society to affirm the human dignity and worth of all aspects of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities.

That will require the civil rights approach described above. But it will also require the liberation approach, which seeks to *change* society, not just to fit in. It means that we must insist that all people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, races, and cultures have an unshakable right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fair and equal treatment under the law.

It is my privilege to serve you as we work together to create this more just society.

Boyce Hinman, Administrator



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Annual Membership Meeting

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would also appreciate having the addresses and phone numbers of the candidates so we can confirm their willingness to run. *Note:* the bylaws do allow the nomination of additional candidates at the annual meeting.

A member is defined by the bylaws as any person who subscribes to the purposes of the Lambda Letters Project and is a volunteer or contributor to the corporation or who is a letter writer in good standing (as established by the Board). A letter writer in good standing is a person who signs letters prepared by the Project or composes original letters and submits them to the Project for delivery to the addressee.

Please submit your name, address, phone number, and background information if you would like to serve on the Board of Directors and please plan to attend our annual meeting on April 20, 1996. Help us make Lambda Letters a representative democracy!

Domestic Violence

Continued from page 4

AB 720 has already passed the Assembly and is currently sitting in the Senate Committee on Appropriations. Soon it will go to the Senate floor for a vote. Although passage in the Senate looks favorable, we want to support the passage since it is such a critical bill and will have a profound effect on victims' lives. Just look at the numbers: in 1988, the U.S. Surgeon General's report listed violence as the number-one health risk among women in terms of total crime. Between one-third and one-half of all adult women are beaten by a husband or partner sometime during their lives. In California, 206 female homicides were committed by a current or former husband or boyfriend during 1993 (Department of Justice statistics).

These women weren't the only victims, either. Many of them left their children behind. Let's support all those who are victims of domestic violence. Please sign this month's letter urging your Senator to support AB 720. Violence of *any kind* must never be tolerated. Rest in peace, Nicole.

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Lambdagrams: An Interim Report

Lambdagrams have gotten off to an exciting start. Over 450 members responded to our appeal and gave us permission to send Lambdagrams in their name on one or more issues. Three quarters of those responding said we could send Lambdagrams on any of the bills covered in our December 1995 mailing.

As of this date we have delivered 8,861 Lambdagrams to the State Legislature. As a result, we will probably deliver well over 10,000 Lambdagrams and letters by the end of January.

That is roughly one third of the letters we delivered in *all* of 1995!

One of the bills we planned to support with Lambdagrams A.B. 720 actually passed the Assembly before the end of the legislative session last fall. Thus it was not a "two year bill" and did not need our Lambdagrams. (A.B. 720 is our featured women's issue this month.)

A bill which we supported, S.B. 399, was dropped by its author at the request of the people who had asked for the legislation in the first place. S.B. 399 would have increased the penalties on garment manufacturers who run substandard sweat shops.

Two of the bills we opposed were dropped by their authors for lack of support. These were S.B. 806, which sought to allow the Boy Scouts to discriminate against gays, and A.B. 727, which would have prohibited public schools, colleges, and universities from considering race as a factor in admissions or financial aid.

Two bills that we supported were defeated. A.B. 658 would have required employers to make reasonable accommodations for pregnant employees. It failed in

the Assembly Labor and Employment Committee. No committee member opposed the bill, but less than a majority voted for it. Possibly those who didn't vote on the bill opposed it but did not want to appear to be voting against mothers. See Table 1 in the middle of the page for a report on how legislators on the committee voted on this bill.

We also supported A.B. 1001, which would have added sexual orientation to all California Education Code non-discrimination clauses. This bill was defeated in the Assembly Education Committee on a straight party line vote with the Democrats supporting the bill and the Republicans opposing it. See Table 2 below for a report on how legislators voted on the bill.

Table 1. Vote on A.B. 658

Legislator	Party	Vote
Martin Gallegos	D	Y
Wally Knox	D	Y
Antonio Villaraigosa	D	Y
Phil Hawkins	R	—
George House	R	—
Howard Kaloogian	R	—
Ted Weggeland	R	—

Table 2. Vote on A.B. 1001

Legislator	Party	Vote
Dede Alpert	D	Y
Joe Baca	D	Y
Susan Davis	D	Y
Barbara Friedman	D	Y
Diane Martinez	D	Y
Kerry Mazzoni	D	Y
Willard Murray	D	—
Michael Sweeney	D	Y
Richard Ackerman	R	N
Steve Baldwin	R	N
Jim Battin	R	—
Paula Boland	R	N
Larry Bowler	R	N
Phil Hawkins	R	N
Keith Olberg	R	N
James Rogan	R	N
Bruce Thompson	R	N
Tom Woods	R	N

Lambda Letters opposed A.B. 1982, which would ban the recognition of same-sex marriages in California. It is probable that same-sex marriages will become legal in Hawaii within a year or two. Under present California law, same-sex marriages that occurred legally in Hawaii would have to be recognized in our state. The purpose of A.B. 1982 is to prevent California from having to recognize such marriages.

A.B. 1982 was approved in late January by the Assembly Judiciary Committee. It was also passed by the full Assembly on January 31st. But we may have a chance to stop the bill in the Senate. Table 3 on the next page shows how members of the Assembly Judiciary Committee voted on the bill.

We also supported S.B. 1287, which would require the California Environmental Protection Agency to study the effects of estrogen-imitating compounds in the environment and their possible links to breast cancer. This bill is scheduled for a vote in the Senate on January 30th, past the deadline for submission of this article. We will let you know the

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Lambdagrams

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outcome of the vote in the next newsletter.

Finally, S.B. 30, which we supported, was defeated on the Senate floor. S.B. 30 would have established a prostate cancer fund and would have supported research on this disease. The bill passed the Legislature last year, but it was vetoed by the Governor. The recent vote in the Senate was an attempt to override his veto—which requires a two-third vote. Only 21 did and so the override attempt failed. Table 4 on the far right shows how the senators voted.

Table 3. Vote on A.B. 1982

Legislator	Party	Vote
Barbara Alby	R	Y
Jim Battin	R	Y
Scott Baugh	R	Y
Jan Goldsmith	R	Y
George House	R	Y
Charles Kaloogian	R	Y
William Knight	R	Y
David Knowles	R	Y
Bill Morrow	R	Y
Debra Bowen	D	N
Susan Davis	D	N
Liz Figueroa	D	N
Kerry Mazzonni	D	N
Cruz Bustamante	D	—
Michael Machado	D	—

Table 4. Vote on S.B. 30

Legislator	Party	Vote
Alfred E. Alquist	D	Y
Ruben S. Ayala	D	Y
Robert G. Beverly	R	N
Daniel Boatwright	D	Y
Charles M. Calderon	D	Y
Jim Costa	D	Y
William A. Craven	R	N
Ralph Dills	D	Y
Leroy F. Greene	D	N
Tom Hayden	D	Y
Ray Haynes	R	N
Teresa Hughes	D	Y
Rob Hurtt	R	N
Maurice Johanessen	R	N
Ross Johnson	R	N
Pat Johnston	D	Y
David G. Kelley	R	N
Lucy Killea	Ind.	Y
Quentin Kopp	Ind.	Y
Bill Leonard	R	N
Tim Leslie	R	N
John Lewis	R	N
Bill Lockyer	D	Y
Kenneth Maddy	R	N
Milton Marks	D	—
Henry Mello	D	Y
Dick Monteith	R	N
Richard Mountjoy	R	N
Jack O'Connell	D	Y
Steve Peace	D	Y
Nicholas C. Petris	D	Y
Richard Polanco	D	Y
Don Rogers	R	N
Herschel Rosenthal	D	Y
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Mike Thompson	D	Y
Diane E. Watson	D	Y
Cathie Wright	R	N

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Faces' men's night features our presentation of Bay Area strippers. See who's new on-stage!

Friday & Saturday • High-energy

TGIF with Faces on Friday with Omar Shariff at the piano for Happy Hour. High-energy dancing till 2 A.M.

Sunday • Tea Dance • 3-8:30 P.M.

Country dancing till 10:30 P.M. and high-energy dancing till 2:00 A.M. Come see why Faces is Sacramento's number one dance club!